



Stefania Zamagni

# The Poppy Field



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**A2/B1**

*The Poppy Field*  
*By Stefania Zamagni, translated into English by Ruth Stephens*  
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Level A2/B1 (Intermediate) English audio-book  
by Stefania Zamagni, translated into English by  
Ruth Stephens

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## Index

1. Fabrizio's Dream.....	4
Glossary.....	5
Exercise.....	5
2. Never Say Never.....	6
Glossary.....	6
Exercise.....	7
3. From Dream to Reality.....	8
Glossary.....	8
Exercise.....	9
4. The Lucky Painting.....	10
Glossary.....	11
Exercise.....	11
5. How Long Does Happiness Last?.....	12
Glossary.....	13
Exercise.....	13
6. An Artist's Life.....	14
Glossary.....	15
Exercise.....	15
7. The Poppy Field.....	16
Glossary.....	17
Exercise.....	17
Solutions.....	18

## 1. Fabrizio's Dream

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It's daybreak. The sun is just coming up; it's still early but Fabrizio is awake. This is his favourite time of day, when the world is still asleep and all is quiet.

The light is special at this hour. Fabrizio has often tried to capture it on canvas but has never managed it.

Fabrizio is an artist... On the floor beside the wardrobe is his latest work: a field of poppies bathed in sunlight. It's probably dry by now and he will be able to take it with the others to the city's art galleries, as he does every day in the hope of being able to exhibit them.

The walls of his flat are covered with his pictures; soon he'll have to find somewhere else to keep them. His studio flat is tiny: one room with a small kitchen and a bed. The bathroom is at the end of the corridor.

But the rent is not high and it's big enough for Fabrizio to paint in. Even so, it's been difficult lately for him to pay the rent each month and he needs to find a solution to his problems as soon as possible.

He stretches and decides to get up. Perhaps today he'll be lucky enough to find a gallery interested in his paintings.

After breakfast he gets dressed and begins to prepare his material. He decides to try a gallery in the centre – the best known in the city. It's not far, so he can walk – the exercise will be good for him.

As he walks, Fabrizio tries to think of what he will say, by way of introduction. But when he reaches the gallery and sees the display in its window of paintings by the celebrated artist Mantovani, his only thought is to turn around and go home. "Maybe I'll come back some other time."

He is about to turn and retrace his steps when he sees a young woman smiling at him from inside the gallery. She beckons him to come in.

"Good morning!"

"Good morning....I'm Fabrizio and .. erm.."

The girl smiles. "You've brought some paintings? Are they yours? Can I see them?"

Without waiting for a reply, she takes the paintings and studies them carefully, one at a time.

"Interesting" she says.

Fabrizio doesn't know what to say. He usually tries to make a good impression with a little speech he prepared, but today words fail him.

"I wonder what her name is?" is all that comes to him.

"Are you busy next Saturday?" she asks him.

Fabrizio is seized with panic.

"Is she asking me out?" he thinks.

"No, I'm free." he says, wondering what will come next.

There is a pause. Finally the girl gives him back the paintings and without any further questions

says "Good. On Saturday at 6 o'clock there will be an aperitivo here, and an exhibition of paintings by emerging artists. Bring your work here tomorrow and we'll put them on display."

She hands him a card with a name and telephone number.

"I'm Marianna. See you tomorrow." "OK. I'm Fabrizio..."

"I know. Tomorrow, then." Fabrizio walks out of the gallery almost without realising it.

He can't believe his luck. His paintings are going to be in an exhibition!

But who is this Marianna?

## **Glossary**

daybreak - alba

canvas - tela

poppies - papaveri

art galleries - gallerie d'arte

exhibit - esporre

studio flat - monolocale

rent - affitto

stretch - distendere i muscoli

beckon - fare cenno

speech - discorso

words fail him - non ha parole

## **Exercise**

True or False? ( Vero o falso? )

1. Fabrizio's flat is very small
2. He doesn't have money to pay the rent.
3. The girl in the art gallery is unfriendly.
4. She agrees to buy some of Fabrizio's paintings.
5. Fabrizio will return to the gallery the next day.